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An Inquiry into the Perceived and Actualized Efficacy of Individualized Second Language Pronunciation Instruction

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An Inquiry into the Perceived and Actualized Efficacy of Individualized Second Language Pronunciation Instruction

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Dedication

To all my English L2 friends and students

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Abstract

An Inquiry into the Perceived and Actualized Efficacy of Individualized Second Language Pronunciation Instruction

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Though communicative methodologies have become preeminent over the past several decades, the skill of L2/FL pronunciation has remained in the shadows, having been relegated to the sidelines along with the outdated methodologies with which it was taught. The purpose of this study was to gain insight into the efficacy of one type of second language pronunciation instruction: Individualized English pronunciation instruction under the Covert Rehearsal Model (Dickerson, 1989). To this end, seventeen university ESL students from various degree programs were recruited to receive six hours of English pronunciation tutoring spread out across six to eight weeks. Instruction was provided by eleven MA student-teachers (tutors), who concurrently received instruction in applied linguistics and pronunciation pedagogy. To evaluate the actual and perceived efficacy of the model, this study drew upon multiple instruments, such as recorded pre- and post-student-assessments, student and tutor questionnaires, and tutor portfolios. Study results indicated that (a) the individualized pronunciation instruction provided by

graduate student-teachers was effective in improving tutees' reading of English reduced vowels, contracted words, intonation contours, and primary phrasal stress; and (b) tutees perceived their instruction as both effective and personally empowering.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Since its infancy in the early 19th century second language pronunciation instruction has waxed and waned with the changing of teaching methodologies. Though some researchers have vocalized their support for a particular approach to pronunciation instruction, few studies have actually proffered empirical evidence to support one method over another. What little empirical evidence does exist seems to suggest that focused pronunciation instruction can in fact lead to notable improvements in the quality of non-native speech and in a relatively short period of time (Derwing, Munro, & Wiebe, 1998; Sardegna, 2006; 2008; 2009; 2011a).

Despite such promising results, there remains a paucity of research on the subject and thus a scarcity of empirically grounded resource materials for teacher training or classroom instruction. Furthermore, by 2001, according to Breitkreutz, Derwing, and Rossiter's (2001) study of Canadian ESL professionals, a mere 30 percent of ESL teachers had received any form of training in pronunciation instruction. The statistics are even more austere for intermediate ESL students in the U.S., with a meager 8 in 100 receiving some form of instruction (Derwing & Munro, 2005).

When one considers the communicative difficulties facing non-native speakers (NNS) who work and reside on college and university campuses alone, such as international teaching assistants, graduate professionals, and foreign faculty members, it seems only natural that further inquiry into the area of pronunciation instruction be conducted (Plakans, 1997). It is thus that this study attempts to address issues of

instructional priorities, perceptions regarding pronunciation instruction, and factors contributing to pronunciation improvement, such as motivation, learning strategies, and the length and quality of practice.

To this aim, individualized instruction via tutoring was provided to international student volunteers by MATESL student-teachers enrolled in EDC 390T, *English as a Second Language: Oral*. The tutoring took place at a large state research university in the southwest, whose annual single campus enrollment ranks within the nation's top five. During the Fall 2011 semester in which this study was conducted, the university hosted nearly five-thousand international students from 121 countries, most notably from China, South Korea, India, Mexico, and Taiwan, comprising a 9.1% of the total student population (24% of graduate student population and 4.7% of undergraduate student population)[1]. The international students received instruction in six, weekly one-hour tutoring sessions spread out across a six to eight week period. The MATESL students providing the tutoring were concurrently receiving training on how to teach pronunciation.

In a nutshell, this study is an empirical examination of (a) the effectiveness of receiving individualized pronunciation instruction under Dickerson's Covert Rehearsal Model (1987, 1990, 1994, in press), and (b) ESL/EFL student perceptions of the model's usefulness for improving their English pronunciation. The findings revealed that (a) the model was effective in helping students improve their pronunciation in a relatively short

[1] The University of Texas at Austin, Office of Information Management and Analysis. Student Characteristics. 2012.

period of time, and (b) the students perceived the model as effective in helping them identify their pronunciation problems as well as the resources and strategies they needed to employ to fix them.

The following chapters are organized as follows. The next chapter reviews the literature on the past and present pedagogical goals and frameworks for English pronunciation instruction, student and teacher perceptions of English pronunciation instruction and students' use of pronunciation strategies, and evidence supporting the efficacy of individualized instruction. It concludes with an outline of the research questions. Chapter Three provides a description of the study's setting, participants, methodology, and design. Chapter Four presents the results, which are then analyzed in Chapter Five. Finally, Chapter Six provides a summation of study findings and a discussion of the pedagogical implications, limitations of the study, and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews previous research on pronunciation instruction from the era of audiolingualism to present-day communicative language models, students' and teachers' perception of L2 pronunciation and strategy use, and the value and efficacy of individualized instruction and tutoring. The chapter concludes with the study's research questions.

Pronunciation Instruction

A Brief Historical Overview of Pronunciation Instruction

Prior to the 1960s, during the reign of audiolingualism and the direct method, pronunciation instruction was considered of great import. The primary focus of instruction was on accuracy in the production of discrete sounds. Behaviorist exercises, such as drilling and the "listen and repeat" method, using de-contextualized vocabulary, were thought to be effective learning components which would precipitate native-like L2 oral productions. The goal of instruction was based on the native principle, which assumes that NNS can and should achieve native-like pronunciation; an assumption that remains quite pervasive even though research has rendered it defunct (Jones, 1997; Levis 2005).

During the course of the 1960 - 1980s, an increasing number of questions began to arise regarding the legitimacy of pronunciation instruction following the advent of Krashen's Natural Approach and the Communicative Language Theory (CLT). These methodologies emphasized realistic and meaningful input, and interactions (Jones, 1997).

Under these new models, the efficacy and value of pronunciation became increasingly obscure, leading many programs and teachers to place ever decreasing attention on the subject (Breitkreutz et al., 2001; Derwing & Munro, 2005; Jones, 1997).

The premise behind most detractors' denigration of pronunciation was based on two assumptions: (a) according to the critical period hypothesis, native-like pronunciation cannot be achieved; and (b) according to Krashen's input hypothesis, pronunciation is an acquired skill, and thus it is governed by acquisition factors that cannot be affected by focused practice or instruction in formal rules (Jones, 1997). Mainly because of these two assumptions, pronunciation was banished from the linguistic skills so commonly considered indispensable for L2 instruction, such as grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and so on. In fact, these two assumptions—the impossibility of reaching a native-like proficiency, and the inability to learn pronunciation through focused practice—, led to the neglect of pronunciation in the research literature, in teacher training programs, in the production of reliable pedagogical materials, and most importantly, in the communicative needs of ESL/EFL students (Munro & Derwing, 1999; Morley, 1991; Pennington & Richards, 1986).

To further elucidate the repercussions of marginalizing pronunciation, a 1991 study by H. D. Brown found that "at best," the number of articles on pronunciation proffered between 1975 and 1988 represented 11.9 percent of the literature (as cited by Gilbert, 2010, p. 4). A similar study (Deng et al., 2009) that reviewed the content of 14 professional journals between 1999 and 2008 concluded that pronunciation continued to

remain insufficiently represented in the research literature. The study asserted that during those ten years just 0.81 percent of the articles in the *Modern Language Journal* concerned pronunciation. Likewise, journals such as *Applied Linguistics* and *Language Learning*, though minimally better, contained only 2.9 percent and 2.63 percent pronunciation-focused works. What is more, scholars have attested that few of the studies produced in the pronunciation field proffer any empirical evidence to support their findings (Derwing & Munro, 2005; Derwing, Munro, & Thomson 2007; Jones, 1997).

Emulating the research corpus, a fairly modest number of instructional materials have been produced. Moreover, despite the shift in theoretical paradigms and titles that claim to the contrary, many of the materials produced also lack empirical support. Much of their content continues to be based on native-speaker (NS) intuitions and the recycled and repackaged behaviorism-based content, popular in former decades (Breitkreutz et al., 2001; Derwing & Munro, 2005; Derwing et al., 1998; Jones, 1997; Morley, 1991). For example, of the activities in *Clear Speech*, one of the most popular pronunciation texts currently available, only about 2 percent of the material concern "meaningful interactions and message transfers beyond one or two sentences" (Jones, 1997, p. 109).

With little attention given to pronunciation in both the research literature and pedagogical materials, it should come as no surprise that the vast majority of ESL teachers have not received training on the topic. This reality has led many teachers to either puzzle over the curriculum or ignore pronunciation instruction altogether. According to a 2002 study by Breitkreutz et al., a reported 67 percent of ESL teachers in

Canada had no formal training in pronunciation instruction, with similar outcomes also reported in Britain and Australia (Derwing & Munro, 2005). What is more, students who did receive some instruction in pronunciation were often misdirected, focusing their attention on targets and techniques of little consequence (Derwing & Munro, 2005).

Present Situation and Communicative Need

Despite the aforementioned disparities in pronunciation related research, training, and materials, the communicative needs of NNS have not diminished, albeit immigrant residents, skilled foreign professionals, or college and university students or faculty. According to a recent study by the Harvard Business School (Kerr & Lincoln, 2008), almost half of all doctorate-holding scientists and engineers in the U.S. are immigrants. Furthermore, 67% of the growth that occurred in America's science and engineering workforce, between 1995 and 2006, can likewise be attributed to skilled foreign workers.

Presently, the U.S. government invests over $25 billion dollars a year [2] in research conducted in science and engineering programs at U.S. institutions of higher education, such as Iowa State University (ISU), where some 30 percent of its foreign student applicants fail to pass their initial SPEAK (Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit) or TSE (Test of Spoken English) exam to become a teaching assistant (Plakans, 1997). Further findings from ISU also revealed that both undergraduate and ESL raters considered applicants' pronunciation to be the "single most important failure in ITAs' overall ability" (Plakans, 1997, p. 99).

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[2] The National Science Foundation, The Federal R&D Obligations to Universities and Colleges Totaled $25 Billion in FY 2007 [Info Brief], 2009.

It is worth noting here that, according to the Institute of International Education (2012), the U.S. hosts nearly 600,000 international students annually, 48 percent of which, during the 2004-2005 academic year, were enrolled as graduate students. Furthermore, an estimated $17.6 billion dollars is contributed to the U.S. economy each year by a foreign student population, which is twice the size of any other host country. Thus, "it is hard to overestimate the importance of international students to U.S. higher education [as they] contribute to the preeminence of U.S. research and development, and to…expenditures estimated at more than $13 billion" (Institute of International Education, 2012, p. 3).

Therefore, it seems paradoxical that foreign language research and instruction, under the communicative language model, would continue to overlook the most important conduit of all oral communication: pronunciation. In a piece of personal correspondence, Marks notes that while "The communicative approach tended to downplay the importance of accuracy in general… [it] somehow overlooked the fact that pronunciation is an immediate barrier to communication unless it has a certain degree of accuracy" (1986, as cited in Gilbert, 2010).

New Pedagogical Focus

Clearly, the number of NNSs, in just higher education alone, demands that researchers, practitioners, and material developers reevaluate pronunciation instruction, neither unduly elevating it to a preeminent status nor removing it from the essential L2 skill set (Levis, 2005). Despite shortcomings in the research corpus, there remains an

echo of agreement in the literature as to a general framework for pronunciation instruction.

At this point, in order to address new goals for instruction, it is necessary that the two formerly mentioned assumptions concerning the efficacy of instruction be addressed. The first assumption was, in accordance with the critical period hypothesis, adult learners are unable to obtain native-like pronunciation in an L2. Though research has yet to speak definitively on this matter, it has indicated that native-like pronunciation is neither necessary nor perhaps to be desired (Derwing & Munro, 2005; Munro & Derwing, 1995; Morley, 1991). In addition, achieving native-like pronunciation might present some unexpected challenges for non-natives. For example, if an L2 speaker is perceived to be native, NSs may presume the L2 speaker likewise possesses native-like knowledge of the host country's cultural and linguistic nuances and would thus be subject to a more austere appraisal of acceptable decorum. Or perhaps, like Christophersen suggests, a NS may instead consider the NNS to be "an uninvited guest making free with his possessions" (1973, as cited by Morley, 1991, p. 499). However, as a significant relationship between accent and identity appears to exist, it is more likely that a NNS would consciously or subconsciously choose to retain some oral features of their L1.

This supposition if supported by data from Jenkins' 2000 study on pronunciation in the context of English as a lingua franca (ELF). In an ELF context, Jenkins noted, pairs of NNS sharing the same L1 made a greater number of deviations in their English pronunciation than pairs of speakers with different L1s. The convergence of an English

pronunciation with a greater number of deviations amongst speakers of the same L1 suggests identity, as opposed to learner interest or ability, may be the preeminent variable influencing L2 accent. Hence, "speakers speak the way they do because of the social groups they belong to or desire to belong to" (Levis, 2005, p. 374). This conclusion buttresses the more recent recognition by researchers and teachers, that a truly comprehensive consideration of pronunciation must entail not only students' communicative context, but their psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic contexts as well (A. Brown, 1989; Cotterall, 2000; Jones, 1997; Morley, 1991). Thankfully, research has also revealed that accent does not necessarily dictate intelligibility, making mutual intelligibility an attainable goal (Derwing & Munro, 2005; Jenkins, 2002; Morley, 1991).

The second critical assumption concerning pronunciation's instructional efficacy was that, in accordance with Krashen's Monitor Theory, L2 pronunciation could not be acquired by rule learning or focused practice. However, in Dickerson's 1987 study, in which a group of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean students were given instruction in formal rules for English pronunciation, students were able to make improvements. Though the study admittedly noted that some interference in initial speech productions did occur, subsequent studies by Dickerson (1987, 1990, 1994) would eventually lead him to theorize that practicing pronunciation via predictive rules could generate meaningful input for learners' acquisition device by means of "covert rehearsal." That is to say, through students' "self-talk" during private practice. Crawford likewise speculated "information stored in explicit linguistic knowledge may become automatic and

transferred to implicit linguistic knowledge after continued use via the monitor" (1987, Crawford, as cited by Jones, 1997, p. 113).

Sardegna's studies (e.g., 2006; 2008; 2009; 2011a) provided much needed empirical evidence in support of the Covert Rehearsal model for improving ESL students' pronunciation. For example, her 2009's study, which tracked students' improvement from five to twenty-five months following intensive instruction based on Dickerson's Covert Rehearsal Model, revealed students' pronunciation of primary stress, construction stress, and word stress improved significantly. In fact, students improved 21 percent in their overall production of English stress. Furthermore, triangulation of students' test scores and questionnaire data revealed time of length in the U.S., nationality, and gender did not directly impact students' short-term improvement. More empirical studies of this kind need to be conducted in order to make stronger claims regarding the long- and short-term effectiveness of the Covert Rehearsal Model for helping students improve their English pronunciation.

Proposed Goals and Frameworks

As previously noted, instructional goals have now surpassed a mere focus on linguistic competency to include an emphasis on students' sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies. The aim of instruction is no longer just to help students survive, but to help them thrive in whatever context they find themselves via an increased communicative competency (H. D. Brown, 2001). In order to promote growth in

students' communicative competencies, students need to be molded into autonomous learners, instead of passive receivers of knowledge. Perhaps Littlewood puts it best:

> If we define autonomy in educational terms as involving students' capacity to use their learning independently of teachers, then autonomy would appear to be an incontrovertible goal for learners everywhere, since it is obvious that no students, anywhere, will have their teachers to accompany them throughout life (1999, as cited by Cotterall, 2000, p. 109).

Cotterall (2000) notes that, to this end, coursework should (a) address student expectations in the context of learner goals and proficiency level, (b) include explicit goals for instruction based on learners' needs, of which learner autonomy is one, and (c) provide some scaffolding scheme to progressively transfer responsibility from teacher to student. Furthermore, according to Morley (1991), additional goals for instructional focus in pronunciation include:

1. An emphasis on communicative-based pedagogical approaches
2. Inclusion and attention given to global speech features (i.e., suprasegmentals) and their ability to enhance comprehensibility
3. A broader treatment of additional affective factors, such as body language
4. A revision of student and teacher roles, lending themselves to autonomous learning and a view of the teacher as facilitator, guide, and coach
5. Meaningful input via practice based on students' needs in their communicative context
6. An expansion of learners' exposure to a variety of pronunciations in the L2 via listening activities
7. Attention to the sound/spelling correlation beyond the scope of phonics
8. Consideration of each learner's uniqueness

Pertaining to a framework for these new goals, Morley proposed the Multidimensional Model, which encompasses the following features: (a) a dual-focus communicative program philosophy; (b) a focus on learner specific goals and contextually meaningful practice; (c) integrated instructional objectives and learner involvement; (d) curricular guidelines for lesson planning; (e) revised view of student roles and responsibilities; and (f) revised view of teacher roles and responsibilities.

Although the Multidimensional Model provides a lucid set of instructional priorities, sadly, it does not provide a sufficiently detailed explanation of learner autonomy to implement within the context of classroom research (Sardegna, 2009). However, Dickerson's Process of Covert Rehearsal (1994, in press), which is based on the Multidimensional Model, provides enough specificity to its description of learner autonomy so as to be testable in a classroom context. Under this model, learner autonomy is accomplished through the inclusion and egalitarian treatment of predictive rules for English pronunciation along with perception and production exercises. Thus, the aim of pronunciation instruction under Dickerson's (1994) model is "to equip students with those liberating skills that enable them to evaluate and modify their own pronunciation for the rest of their English speaking-careers" (p. 32).

Student and Teacher Perceptions and Strategies

In 2002, Derwing and Rossiter conducted a study into ESL learners' perceptions of their pronunciation needs and strategies. Utilizing one-hundred full-time college ESL students from 19 L1s, ranging in age from 19-64, the researchers conducted individual, 1-

1.5 hour interviews over a six week period. During the interviews, students were asked to answer questions regarding general communication difficulties they had experienced, as well as any perceived difficulties in their English pronunciation, and to respond to various statements using a seven-point rating scale. Study findings indicated that for one third of the participants, people often or very often found it difficult to understand them, with 37% of these participants being asked to repeat themselves often or very often. When asked if they believed their communication difficulties were due to pronunciation, other language problems, or both, 42 students cited pronunciation as the primary problem, 43 indicated 'other language problems,' another 13 believed both pronunciation and language problems were to blame, and the two remaining students indicated they either had no problem communicating or neither factor was responsible. Concerning particular difficulties in their pronunciation, 39 students were unable to identify one, and of the remaining 61 students, 84% indicated segmental errors. Despite allowing students to cite additional errors, only 10% mentioned prosodic speech features.

Furthermore, few of the participants in Derwing and Rossiter's (2002) study could explain how they became aware of their pronunciation difficulties. However, those who were able cited the comments of friends, roommates, or members of their host family. What is more, every case called attention to segmental errors. Additional findings noted that while 77% of the students tried to pay attention to and recall the pronunciation of others, only 48% believed they had a good ability to do so. Perhaps the most noteworthy finding, however, was that "90% of all learners stated that they would take a

pronunciation program if one were available" (p. 161). Hence, Derwing and Rossiter noted the obvious disparity which exists between students' outlook, current research support for teaching suprasegmental speech features, the present quantity of instruction on segmental errors, and the general imbalance between instruction in pronunciation and that of other linguistic skills, such as grammar or vocabulary. Finally, the researchers noted that of the general communication strategies students claimed to employ, such as paraphrasing, self-repetition, writing/spelling, volume adjustment, slower speech rate, and speaking clearly, participants appeared to rely heavily on those of little import.

Other studies, in regards to students' choice of strategies, affirm Derwing and Rossiter's findings. For example, Griffiths and Parr's (2001) comparison of students' and teachers' perceptions of students' use of cognitive, social, memory, compensation, metacognitive, and affective strategies revealed a considerable variance between the two groups, most notably, students' ranked 'memory' as the least used of the six strategy types, while teachers perceived memory strategies were used most often by students. In a similar vein, A. Brown (2009) noted that while communicative teaching methods are popular in present research and thus in teacher training programs, it seems that students' perceptions of effective teaching methods may lag behind, with many still preferring a grammar focused approach. While recalling some earlier findings from Horwitz (1988), Kern (1995), and Schulz (1996) concerning unrealistic expectations of beginning language students (e.g., the 40% of students in Horwitz's study who believed fluency in a foreign language could be achieved in two years or less), A. Brown warns his readers of

the negative ramifications of divergent student/teacher beliefs. Citing Williams and Burden's (1997, as cited in Brown, 2009, p. 46) finding that learners' perceptions "have the greatest influence on achievement," A. Brown also notes that contrarily a "mismatch in expectations for classroom teaching may result in disillusionment, regardless of achievement or grades" (A. Brown, 2009, p. 46).

Indeed, a disconnect in student/teacher perceptions carries implications which reach beyond the relationship between instructional approaches and student motivation, to influence students' choice of learning strategies as well (Brown, 2009; Chamot, 1993; McCargar, 1993; Osburne, 2003; Oxford, 1989; Oxford & Crookall, 1989; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Pickard, 1996). In fact, if students' original strategy preferences, particularly those rooted in cultural milieu are in opposition to a strategy put forth for student training, the outcome may be calamitous (Osburne, 2003). Hence, teachers should note that the "most effective [form of] strategy training *explicitly* teaches learners why and how to do the following: (a) use new strategies, (b) evaluate the effectiveness of different strategies, and (c) decide when it is appropriate to transfer a given strategy to a new situation" (Oxford, 1989, p. 244). Furthermore, and in particular regard to strategy training for pronunciation instruction, it would behoove teachers to first assess students' strategies, discuss their motivations (i.e., students' goals), reflect on students' personal background, L2 experience, pronunciation needs, and discuss both the student's and teacher's perceptions of the goal of pronunciation instruction, whether NS or mutual intelligibility/comprehensibility (Jenkins, 2005; Oxford, 1989).

This might all be easily dealt with, at least as regards pronunciation instruction, if it were not for the meager number of teachers who have received training. What is more, it seems many of those who have received some form of phonological training may still avoid pronunciation instruction, having never properly bridged the gap between theory and practice. Though there is some evidence that most MA TESOL programs in the U.S. include at least one course that is "phonology-related," program graduates often feel unequipped, apart from the curriculum, to address students' pronunciation problems. When asked during a semi-structured interview what he needed to teach pronunciation, one ESL teacher responded: "If you'll give me something I can do as a teacher is basically it, 'cause the theory is fascinating, but it's hard to get to do it in the classroom" (Baker, 2011, p. 283).

Individualized Instruction and Tutoring

One method of instruction, which has demonstrated considerable merit in a number of contexts, is individualized instruction vis-à-vis tutoring. Supervised tutoring may offer instructors adequate support to bridge the gap between theory and practice, while also providing NNS students focused intensive instruction in English oral prediction, perception, and production, facilitating student autonomy. Tutoring sessions should include "(a) a *systematic arrangement* of the subject matter to be taught, (b) specific, predetermined *instructional* strategies for the use of stimulus material, practice, and corrective feedback, (c) explicit *management procedures*, which include instructional prescriptions and records of student progress, (d) specific *materials* that facilitate the

instruction and management processes, and (e) the *training* of tutors in instructional and management strategies" (Frey & Reigeluth, 1986, p.5).

Researchers have also suggested that instruction should be beneficial for the tutor as well as the student (Cloward, 1976) and that continual feedback and curricular flexibility in relation to learner and task variables, also enhances instructional efficacy. For example, Merrill et al. (1995) cites a study in which tutored students performed two standard deviations higher than peers and thus claims, along with Frey and Reigeluth (1986), that peer tutoring can have a greater impact on students' motivation and pedagogical achievement than traditional classroom instruction. Similarly, a study by Rosenbaum (1973, as cited in Frey & Reigeluth, 1986) found that 74% of the students who received tutoring "mastered an instructional sequence in less than half the time allowed for conventional teaching" (p. 6). Though Rosenbaum admittedly did not believe the benefits of peer tutoring could extend to instruction which is not operationally defined, such as foreign language, Dickerson's work (1987, 1990, 1994, in press), as mentioned earlier, has since rendered English pronunciation instruction operational. Furthermore research conducted by Ellson (1976, as cited in Frey & Reigeluth, 1986) suggests, for basic skills, peer mediated tutoring may be up to ten times more cost effective than classroom instruction.

The scarce research that has explored the effectiveness of individualized instruction has typically concerned university writing centers (but see Sardegna, 2005). Despite the narrow scope, a general tutoring framework does emerge from the research

corpus. A recent investigation (Matthews, 2010) of individualized foreign language (FL) instruction, vis-à-vis a large Midwestern university's tutoring center in which FLs were the third most commonly tutored subject, found successful tutoring accounted for students' affective factors as well as achievement. Regarding tutoring factors that promote students' self-efficacy, the researcher found motivationally efficacious tutoring sessions tended to be shorter in duration, facilitated students' comprehension of the FL's structure through explicit rule instruction and higher order questioning, and typified the FL as a structured, learnable system. Surprisingly, no significant difference was found between motivationally successful and unsuccessful tutoring, despite tutors' admitted inability to answer some questions. However, tutor admissions of error were found to result in motivationally ineffective sessions.

Similarly, a study by VanLehn et al. (2003) found a significant correlation between shorter tutoring sessions and frequent student gains. Additional findings revealed a link between motivationally effective lessons and tutors' positive descriptions of the FL's consistency, whereas motivationally ineffective lessons were associated with tutors' negative comments and/or few positive statements concerning the FL. Furthermore, within motivationally effective lessons, tutors rebutted students' negative comments on the difficulty of the FL's acquisition.

These findings are congruent with previous research concerning the relationship between instructional goals and outcomes (Locke & Latham, 1994), which suggests that students with specific, well-defined goals are more likely to assess their achievements

correctly and make greater gains than their peers. Matthews' (2010) study evaluating fifty hours of tutoring interactions provides additional affective correlates for successful FL tutoring including: (a) solidarity between tutor and student, (b) explicit instruction and examples of the FL's rules, (c) students' progressive performance of error correction, (d) tutors' prevision of new goals for achievement, and (e) tutors' refrain from overloading students with new subject material. But perhaps Weigle and Nelson's paraphrase of Henning's (2001) findings summarizes the requirements for effective tutoring best, albeit FL writing or pronunciation, as "(a) how well a tutor negotiates an agenda that meets the needs and expectations of the tutee, (b) whether or not [tutees] are able to get and apply the information they need, and (c) how well the tutor established rapport with the tutee" (Weigle & Nelson, 2004, p. 221).

Finally, it should be noted that there are several additional factors that may also influence the establishment of student/tutor rapport and thus pedagogical outcomes, such as gender, age, L1 background, and nationality/cultural group (McCargar, 1993; Thonus, 1999a; Weigle & Nelson, 2004). Furthermore, MA TESOL administrators should give some attention to the instructional content of tutoring vis-à-vis student-teachers, as there is some evidence to suggest teachers/tutors have a propensity to only provide instruction on curricular elements with which they are comfortable, regardless of the element's import (Derwing & Rossiter, 2002; Weigle & Nelson, 2004).

In sum, a review of studies on individualized instruction has revealed that this type of instruction can be effective if the following conditions are apparent:

1. The tutor provides continuous feedback and curricular flexibility in relation to learner and task variables.
2. The sessions are short in duration.
3. The tutor facilitates the tutee's comprehension of the FL's structure through explicit rule instruction and higher order questioning.
4. There is solidarity between tutor and tutee.
5. The tutee progresses with error correction.
6. The tutor sets new goals for achievement, and negotiates the agenda with the tutee.
7. The tutor refrains from overloading the tutee with new subject material.
8. The tutee is able to get and apply the information as needed.
9. The tutor establishes good rapport with the tutee.

Despite the potential magnitude of previous research findings, such as in the case of covert rehearsal and its apparent potential to facilitate students' improvement in pronunciation through the provision of meaningful input, further empirical support is yet necessary to provide sufficient evidence for the success of its general application. Furthermore, a rather small number of studies have investigated the efficacy of L2/FL instruction within the context of tutoring. That which has been conducted almost solely concerns tutoring as a supplement to L2/FL writing instruction. Finally, though a number of studies have examined students' perceptions/beliefs regarding language learning and acquisition, again, relatively few have considered students' perceptions of pronunciation instruction and the goals of such instruction or the feasibility of such goals.

Thus, in order to help bridge some of the aforementioned gaps, the purpose of this study is two-fold: (a) to determine the actual effectiveness of individualized English pronunciation instruction, and (b) to gain insight into students' beliefs regarding the perceived value and efficacy of said instruction.

Specifically, my research questions are:

Question 1 What is the actual effectiveness of individualized pronunciation instruction under the Covert Rehearsal Model?

Question 2 What are students' perceptions of the effectiveness and usefulness of individualized instruction under the Covert Rehearsal Model?

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This thesis examines individualized instruction through the efforts of first and second year graduate students enrolled in EDC 390T - *English as a Second Language: Oral*. These MA students received a semester of training in English pronunciation instruction and were each required to tutor two ESL students an hour a week over the course of eight weeks. The coursework was largely based on Dickerson's (1987, 1990, 1994, in press) Covert Rehearsal Model. Under the Covert Rehearsal Model, teachers empower ESL/EFL learners with specific pronunciation strategies that they can use to improve their pronunciation on their own in and outside of classroom settings. During tutoring, the ESL students learned pronunciation strategies to improve segmental features (i.e., vowel and consonant sounds) as well as suprasegmental features (i.e., phenomena that extend over more than one sound segment, such as phrase stress, intonation, rhythm, and so on). The goal of this thesis is to analyze and discuss improvement concerning the following suprasegmental features: reduction, contractions, intonation, and primary phrase stress.

This chapter describes the study's participants, teaching intervention and data sources, and explains the experimental design of the study. The chapter concludes with a report of inter-rater reliability on achievement test scores.

Participants

In order to ascertain the efficacy of individualized instruction under the Covert Rehearsal Model (Dickerson, 1989, 1990, 1994, in press), two groups of participants

were recruited in Fall 2011. The first group consisted of international university students (henceforth, tutees) taking an English as a Second Language (ESL) or International Teaching Assistant (ITA) course. The second group consisted of student teachers (henceforth, tutors) taking EDC 390T - *English as a Second Language: Oral* and pursuing MA degrees in Foreign Language Education or a related field.

Once approval was obtained from the university's research board, the researcher began the process of study recruitment. Tutees were informed via email of the opportunity to participate in the research study when they were contacted to confirm their tutoring schedules. Tutors were informed via email of the opportunity to participate in the research study after they had received their final grades for EDC 390T - *English as a Second Language: Oral.* Both email recruitment messages provided prospective participants with a brief description of the research study, an explanation of informed consent, and a request that volunteers read an attached consent form before replying with an affirmative statement granting their consent. Tutees were also informed that tutoring would not be denied to any of them on the basis of their decision to participate in the study. The form for tutees requested their permission to collect and analyze their responses to weekly questionnaires and any recorded assessments and/or activities concerning their progress and work during the tutoring sessions (see Student Participant Consent Form in Appendix A). All the students that volunteered for tutoring replied to this email in agreement; hence, every tutee also became a study participant. The form for tutors requested their permission to collect and analyze their course portfolios, which

contained their tutee(s)' assessments; activities, lesson plans, materials, and reflections; reflections to observation reports; observation reports of other tutors' lessons; weekly tutor and tutee questionnaires; final written evaluative report(s) of their tutee(s); and tutee(s)' individualized education plan (see the Student Teacher Participant Consent Form in Appendix A). All tutors confirmed their participation in the study as well.

A total of 17 tutees (eight male and nine female) between the ages of 18 and 43 agreed to participate in the study during Fall 2011. Their responses to the Learner Profile Sheet (see Learner Profile Sheet in Appendix B) administered on the first tutoring session indicated that they were from China, India, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, and Vietnam (see Table 1). They were four non-degree, five undergraduate, and eight graduate students, from various departments and degree programs at the University of Texas at Austin. Their academic fields included Accounting, Business, Civil Engineering, Computer Engineering, Electrical Engineering, English, Industrial Engineering, Nursing, Music, Occupational Therapy, Pharmacy, and non-degree coursework in ESL. They had a pre-intermediate or intermediate level of English proficiency, were enrolled in at least one university ESL or ITA course, and had volunteered and been chosen, on the basis of matching tutor/tutee availability, to receive, in pairs, free individualized lessons on English pronunciation from graduate student-teachers (i.e., the tutors) enrolled in EDC 390T - *English as a Second Language: Oral* during Fall 2011.

Table 1

The Distribution of Tutees' Native Countries and Languages

	Students N=17
China/ Mandarin	2
India/ Hindi	1
Korea/ Korean	9
Saudi Arabia/ Arabic	3
Thailand/ Thai	1
Vietnam/ Vietnamese	1

A total of 11 tutors agreed to participate in the study. They were all enrolled in EDC 390T - *English as a Second Language: Oral* course at the University of Texas at Austin. They were graduate students (two male and nine female) between the ages of 20 and 36, from the U.S., China, Korea, Mexico, Sudan, Taiwan, and Turkey (see Table 2), with a wide range of teaching and learning experiences.

Table 2

The Distribution of Tutors' Native Countries and Languages

	Tutors N=11
China/ Mandarin	1
S. Korea/ Korean	2
Mexico/ Spanish	1
Sudan/ Arabic	1
Taiwan/ Mandarin	1
Turkey/ Turkish	1
U.S.A./ English	4

Setting, Teaching Intervention, and Materials Description

Tutoring was conducted in reserved group study rooms within the campus' main library. Each study room was equipped with a white board, markers, erasers, a long table and chairs, and wireless access to the university's intranet. Tutoring was carried out in six weekly, one-hour sessions. Tutors worked at their tutees' pace, with instructional sessions spread out over an eight week period during the months of October and November. Beginning with the sixth week of the Fall semester, tutors started to provide instruction to tutees while still in training.

The content provided during tutoring closely followed that of the coursework tutors were receiving in EDC 390T - *English as a Second Language: Oral*, which

included materials from handouts developed by the course instructor as well as materials and activities taken from two textbooks: Hahn and Dickerson's (1999), *Speechcraft: Discourse pronunciation for advanced learners,* and Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin's (2010) *Teaching pronunciation: A course book and reference guide* (2nd Ed.). The content of EDC 390T handouts covered topics such as consonant and vowel phonemes and allophones, sample 3P model exercises, tips on using such exercises and for correcting tutees' mistakes, pedagogical priorities, lip rounding, reduced vowels, and rules for primary phrasal level stress. In addition to the former resources, tutors utilized materials of their own creation, which also followed Dickerson's 3P instructional model (1987a, 1990, 1994a, in press; Hahn & Dickerson, 1999) and guidance provided by the EDC 390T course instructor. As per the course requirements of EDC 390T - *English as a Second Language: Oral*, tutors had to provide links to online resources for further controlled and communicative pronunciation activities and exercises. With these resources, tutees could practice employing the strategies they learned, outside of the classroom, thus facilitating independent learning while enhancing their sense of empowerment.

For example, in order to guide their utterances and subsequent improvement through the use of covert rehearsal without the further involvement of an instructor, tutees were presented with sets of explicit rules for assessing the placement of different types of contrast stress. To illustrate such a strategy, a sample of contrastive phrasal stress (i.e., a change in pitch and the placement of primary stress) taken from a handout of EDC

309T coursework is shown in Figure 1 below, with words receiving primary stress indicated in bold and a black dot (See Figure 1).

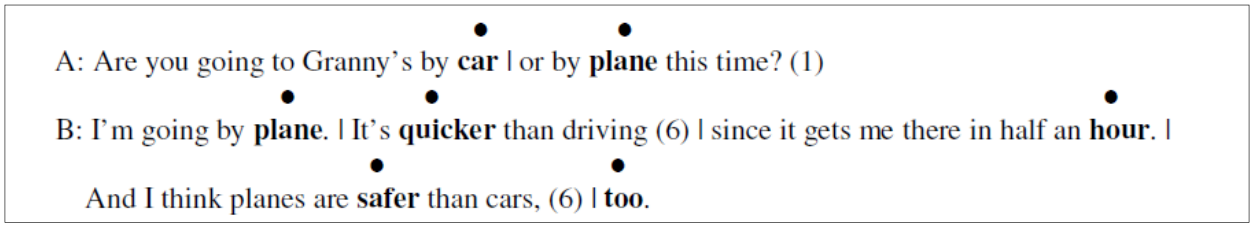

Figure 1. Sample dialog from EDC 390T Handout 11, Primary Phrase Stress.

In part A of the dialogue, *car* and *plane* demonstrate the correct use of contrastive stress in choice questions. Tutees could reach such a conclusion through the recall and oral rehearsal of contrast stress rules for choice questions. In this example, the rule that applies is, "when explicit contrasts are made, the primary stress and pitch go on the contrasting elements, even if they are old information" (Sardegna, 2011b).

In addition to the aforementioned tutoring materials, tutees and tutors filled out feedback forms at the beginning and end of each tutoring session. These questionnaires were completed independently by tutees, without any prompting by their tutor. The tutor read the answers to the questionnaires during the instructional period in order to adjust and/or improve their teaching practice and preparation of materials accordingly.

Experimental Design

Data Collection Sources and Considerations

In order to answer research question #1 (i.e., "What is the actual effectiveness of individualized pronunciation instruction under the Covert Rehearsal Model?"),

achievement scores for four suprasegmental features (reduction, contractions, intonation, and primary phrase stress) were obtained before and after instruction. That is, a pre-and post-test experimental design was used to analyze tutees' improvement resulting from receiving instruction under the Covert Rehearsal Model. Since tutees were tested on the same targets using the same test for both pre- and post-measurements, the researcher was able to control for improvements which could result from testing different targets/words rather than improvement resulting from tutees' use of predictive and production strategies. During recording, tutees were presumed and expected to monitor their production of all pronunciation features learned during the tutoring, which included other targets (e.g., vowel and consonant sounds, word stress, etc.) that are not under analysis here. Though tutees only received six hours of instruction in between testing times, the read aloud test took approximately fifteen minutes, which most likely prevented tutees from recalling significant portions of the text from one test to the other, and even if they recalled them, they had no way of knowing which target was being assessed for any particular item. That is, a word could be used to test students' accuracy with a particular sound, phrasal stress, word stress, linking, and so on. The student was expected to monitor all these features concurrently when pronouncing the word.

Furthermore, tutees' oral productions were assessed in a laboratory setting through the contrived means of a carefully selected read-aloud passage. In so doing, this study measured tutees' rehearsed, rather than naturally occurring, speech. These conditions were necessary in order to render an assessment that could provide precision

data for comparison of tutees' oral productions over time. Additionally, such conditions were necessary to guarantee tutees would attempt to produce the various types of targets chosen for assessment. It is likewise important to note the conspicuous nature of diagnostic recordings, as tutees were required to utilize either a headset or microphone while a rater recorded their oral productions on a laptop computer, thus making tutees indubitably aware that their speech was under assessment.

In order to answer research question # 2 (i.e., "What are students' perceptions of the effectiveness and usefulness of individualized instruction under the Covert Rehearsal Model?"), a Learner Profile Sheet, and Student (tutee) and Teacher (tutor) Feedback Forms were collected and analyzed (see Learner Profile Sheet on Appendix B, and Student and Instructor Feedback Forms on Appendix C). The Learner Profile Sheet was completed at the beginning of instruction. The feedback forms were completed by both tutees and tutors on each tutoring session before and after instruction. All these forms were brief in nature, generally taking around five minutes to complete. Tutors collected their tutees' forms at the end of each session and reviewed them prior to the following lesson. This was done so tutors could glean critical insights from their tutees' feedback and adjust and/or improve their teaching practice and preparation of materials accordingly. Finally, the data from the Student and Instructor Feedback Forms was triangulated with additional information gathered from the tutor's course portfolios which contained (a) tutee(s)' written and oral assessments; (b) the tutor's activities, lesson plans,

and materials used/developed for the tutoring lessons; (c) the tutor's reflections on the outcomes of the lessons, and (d) other tutors' observation reports of the tutor's lessons.

Data Recording and Analysis

The same test was used during both pre- and post-testing. The test included a reading passage, a list of academic words, and several question prompts to help generate 2-3 minutes of extemporaneous speech. Each tutee read through the passage once, which took an average of four minutes to complete. They were then asked to also read aloud an academic word list, reading each of the words through twice consecutively. After the read-aloud, they spoke freely for a few minutes in response to the question prompts.

In order to familiarize themselves with the sample passage prior to recording and consider possible answers to the prompt questions, tutees were given time to read the passage and questions, and to practice. A maximum of ten minutes was allotted for such practice; however, most tutees chose to practice for five minutes or less. Additionally, almost all of the tutees chose to read the passage silently or "mouth" words to themselves prior to recording. It should be noted that neither the passage nor the words used during pre testing were used as examples during tutoring instruction. Thus, it is unlikely that tutees' resulting post-test scores seven to eight weeks later would be significantly skewed by their recollections or familiarity with the testing materials.

At the first meeting, the tutees were divided in two groups. The tutees in the first group met individually with the researcher, while the tutees in the second group met individually with the course instructor to record their diagnostic test with the pre-selected

segmental (N = 230) and suprasegmental (N = 130) targets. The pre-selected segmental targets in the reading passage included 67 vowels, 122 consonants, 4 invisible-Y words, 7 S-initial consonant clusters, 20 –s and –ed endings, and 10 consonant clusters including either /r/ or /l/. The pre-selected suprasegmental targets in the reading passage included 10 contractions, 20 reductions, 48 linked sounds, 31 phrasal stress words, and 25 intonation targets. The word list consisted of twenty-two academic words with a high frequency error rate within most university student populations. The questions for extemporaneous speech production were eight: (a) Where are you from? (b) What do you study? (c) What do you do for fun? (d) What did you do during the break? (e) What do you plan to do after graduation? (f) What problems do you have with oral English? (g) (oral communication)? (h) What do you hope to improve this semester? Copies of the original test instrument and rating templates are not provided here for security purposes as they are currently in use for testing at the university. While the students were expected to monitor for the accurate production of all these targets, the focus of the current study was their accuracy on the 10 contractions, 20 reductions, 31 phrasal stress words, and 25 intonation targets in the read-aloud test. Students' extemporaneous speech was not analyzed in the current study. That is, tutees were tested on their ability to apply the pronunciation rules learned during tutoring to general examples they might encounter during the read-aloud. Hence, this study cannot make a claim on the extemporaneous speech of tutee participants, but rather it assesses tutees' oral abilities through their reading accuracy.

After the recording, each tutee met with their tutors who went over their Learner Profile Sheet and asked them some additional questions. Once tutors listened to their assigned tutees' (N = 1 or 2) recordings, they tallied their errors prior to the onset of tutoring in order to ascertain targets for individualized instruction. They generally selected 5-7 targets for instruction according to each tutee's needs. The researcher tallied tutees' errors again and used her scores—not the tutors' scores—for the current analysis.

Along with an evaluation of the efficacy of individualized pronunciation instruction based on Dickerson's 3P model, this study also evaluated tutees' perceptions of such instruction. In accordance with the present literature, this study used initial interviews and weekly questionnaires (Pickard 1996), which included items for self-report (Ehrman & Oxford, 1995; Griffiths & Parr, 2001; Nyikos & Oxford, 1993), to discreetly assess tutees' behavior (Oxford, 1989; Oxford & Crookall, 1989) and triangulate these data with diagnostic test scores.

Tutees were given a few minutes at the beginning and end of each tutoring session to fill out the pre- and post-lesson Feedback Forms (see Appendix C for a copy of the Student Feedback Form). Questions regarding the homework exercises and any accompanying online resources assigned from the previous lesson were answered before each lesson, and questions concerning the day's lesson were answered at the end of each lesson. These weekly questionnaires elicited information such as their preferred study habits, most challenging pronunciation items (prior to tutoring), types of materials used

for practice, time spent in practice each week, usefulness of their tutor's feedback, and their perceptions of how much they improved during the course of tutoring.

Tutors completed their questionnaires at the same time and were thus available to assist tutees in clarifying the meaning of any of their questions on their feedback form. Tutors' feedback forms entailed pre-lesson questions regarding the tutor's perceptions of their tutees' preparation for each lesson and time spent on homework, with the later portion of the questionnaire focusing on insights from the day's lesson. As noted earlier, these questionnaires enabled tutor's to compare their perceptions of each lesson with those of their tutees, again, honing their teaching practices and the development of subsequent materials.

Both of the feedback forms included 13/14 questions rated on a Likert scale of 5-1, with *strongly agree* at 5 and *strongly disagree* at 1. In addition, the forms included three fill-in-the-blank questions, as well as two questions which required respondents to circle all the adjectives they felt applied in a given instance.

The following chapter reports the results of the study's collected data. First, it shows tutees' percentages of improvement on the prosodic features of reduction, contractions, intonation, and primary phrase stress, and tutees' percentage of overall improvement. Second, it provides information obtained from tutees' weekly feedback forms regarding their perceptions of the effectiveness of the instruction received. Finally, it reports other data obtained from tutors' portfolios that revealed factors contributing to greater or lesser pronunciation improvement.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

This chapter reports the results of the present study's quantitative and qualitative measurements in order to answer the two research questions. To these ends, each research question is reproduced below and addressed one at a time.

Question 1 What is the actual effectiveness of individualized pronunciation instruction under the Covert Rehearsal Model?

Student's improvement scores for reduction, contractions, intonation, and primary stress were calculated against a 100 percent base. More precisely, improvement was calculated by subtracting students' pre-test (T1) mean percentage scores from their post-test (T2) mean percentage scores. Though test effect was not controlled for in this study, it is improbable that reusing the diagnostic instrument during post-testing would have affected student outcomes, as (a) students were unaware of test targets, (b) the average time for completion was four minutes, making memorization or recollection of a substantial number of items unlikely, (c) tutors did not and were expressly directed to not utilize test content for instructional purposes, and (d) the eight week time span between pre- and post-testing would likely decrease significant familiarity with test content.

In order to analyze the results of the study's treatment, that is, tutoring based on Dickerson' Covert Rehearsal Model, descriptive statistics were calculated for pre- and post-test scores on each prosodic feature subgroup. The pretest means and standard deviation for each prosodic subgroup were as follows: reduction (M = 48.82, SD = 17.547), contractions (M = 48.82, SD = 21.760), intonation (M = 64.70, SD = 17.276),

and primary stress (*M* = 48.20, *SD* = 11.932) (See Table 3). The posttest means and standard deviation for each prosodic subgroup were as follows: reduction (*M* = 62.06, *SD* = 18.545), contractions (*M* = 58.82, *SD* = 19.963), intonation (*M* = 72.24, *SD* = 17.074), and primary stress (*M* = 57.12, *SD* = 17.916) (See Table 4). Thus, there were mean gains of 13.23 percent in reduction, 10 percent in contractions, 7.53 percent in intonation, and 8.92 percent in primary stress between pre- and post- tests (see Figure 2).

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for the Mean Percentage Scores for all Students at T1

Test 1	**N**	**M**	**SD**	***Minimum***	***Maximum***
Reduction	17	48.82	17.547	10	75
Contractions	17	48.82	21.760	20	100
Intonation	17	64.70	17.276	28	96
Primary Stress	17	48.20	11.932	29.03	64.52
Total	17	52.62	7.524	41.68	66.38

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for the Mean Percentage Scores for all Students at T2

Test 2	N	M	SD	*Minimum*	*Maximum*
Reduction	17	62.06	18.545	30	100
Contractions	17	58.82	19.963	20	100
Intonation	17	72.24	17.074	52	96
Primary Stress	17	57.12	17.916	29.03	96.77
Total	17	62.56	9.903	50.93	84.94

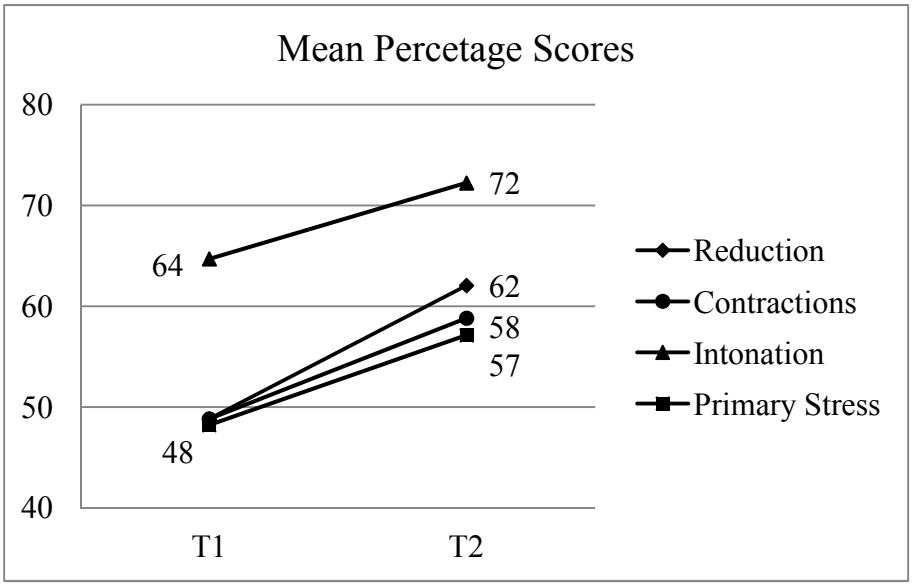

Figure 2. Mean percentage scores for prosodic features at T1 and T2

Next, in order to determine the statistical significance of the difference between students' mean pretest (T1) scores and posttest (T2) scores, if any, a paired-samples *t*-test was performed for (a) scores for reduction on the pre- versus the post-test, (b) scores for

contractions on the pre- versus the post-test, (c) scores for intonation on the pre- versus the post-test, and (d) scores for primary stress on the pre- versus the post-test. Table 5 provides a summation of the difference between the pre- and post-test scores, including the *t*-value, its degree of freedom (*df*), and the *p*-value determining statistical significance.

Table 5

Paired T-Test for Students' Scores on Pre and Post Tests

Pair	**Difference**	**T1**	**T2**	***t*-value**	***Df***	***p*-value**
Reduction	-13.23	48.82	62.06	-4.825	16	.000
Contractions	-10.00	48.82	58.82	-2.749	16	.014
Intonation	-7.53	64.70	72.24	-2.154	16	.047
Primary Stress	-8.92	48.2	57.12	-3.528	16	.003
Total	-9.920	52.64	62.56	-5.418	16	.000

The results of the paired t-test performance revealed a significant difference between students' scores on the pre- and the post-diagnostic tests for all four pairs. That is, after receiving intensive instruction from tutors, tutees' production significantly changed for reduction ($p = .000$), for contractions ($p = .014$), for intonation ($p = .047$), and for

primary stress (p = .003), for a combined total improvement of 9.92 percent (p = .000). See Figure 3 for the percentage score change for all four prosodic features from T1 to T2.

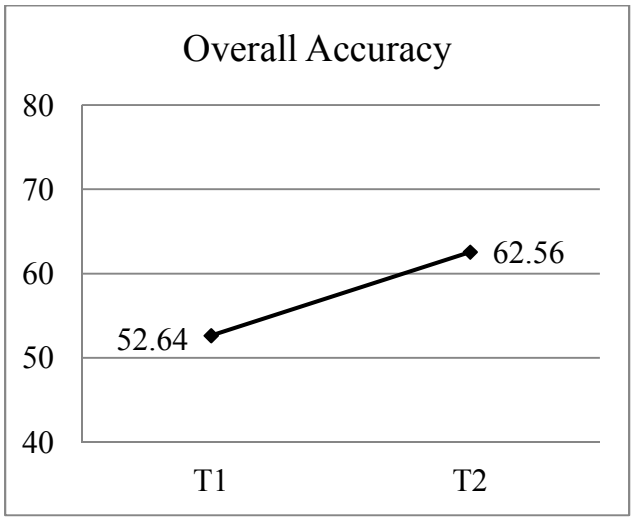

Figure 3. Total improvement in tutee scores from T1 to T2

Question 2 What are students' perceptions of the effectiveness and usefulness of individualized instruction under the Covert Rehearsal Model?

Weekly questionnaires were designed to assess tutees' perceptions of a number of tutoring factors with the assumption that the combination of such factors would render the clearest insights into tutees' beliefs. Of the eighteen questions on tutees' feedback forms, thirteen were answerable on a Likert scale from 5 to 1, with 5 "strongly agree" and 1 "strongly disagree." In a descriptive statistical analysis of questionnaire data, the researcher calculated the total percentage of all tutee responses for each scale point answer as well as the mean scale score for each question. Finally, questions were grouped together by theme for further comparison, e.g. tutees' perceptions, versus their use of practice materials (See Chapter 5 Discussion). Figure 4 shows tutees' mean scale scores

for each question (see Appendix C for the exact questions on the Student Feedback Form).

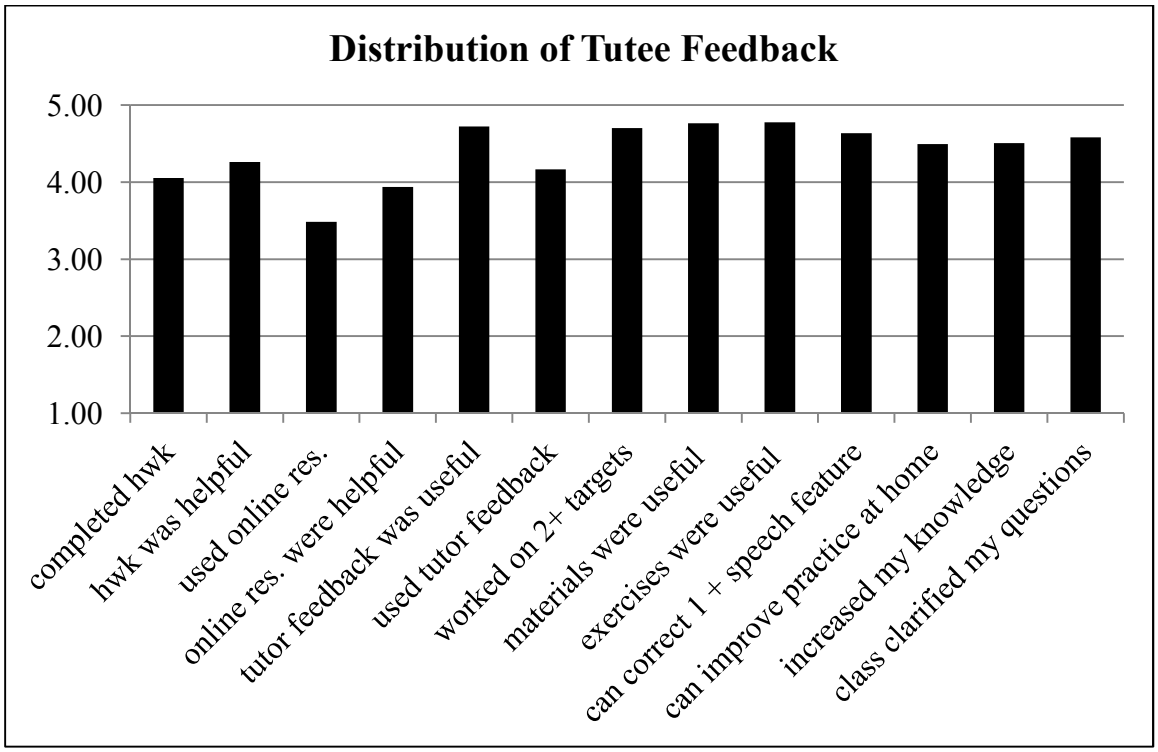

Figure 4. Distribution of mean scale scores for questions on the Student Feedback Form

Analysis of tutees' responses to feedback questions revealed some interesting outcomes for several questions. Comparison of questions five and nine revealed while 95 percent of tutees "strongly agreed" (.76) or "agreed" (.19) that their tutor's feedback was useful, 82 percent strongly agreed" (.42) or "agreed" (.40) that they incorporated their tutor's feedback into their homework practice. Concerning question one, 77 percent of the tutees "strongly agreed" (.34) or "agreed" (.43) they had completed their assigned homework, while 23 percent indicated either a mid-scale "undecided or moderate" position (.15), "disagreed" (.05), or "strongly disagreed" (.03). However, results for

question two indicated a slightly larger percentage of tutees, 84 percent, "strongly agreed" (.48) or "agreed" (.36) their assigned homework was useful, with only 16 percent choosing "undecided/neutral" (.10), "disagreed" (.03), or "strongly disagreed" (.03). Also interestingly, question three revealed only 61 percent of tutees "strongly agreed" (.37) or "agreed" (.24) that they used the online resources given to them by their tutors, with 39 percent marking their responses as either "undecided/moderate" (.17), "disagreed" (.01), or "strongly disagreed" (.21). In contrast, results from question four regarding how helpful tutees' perceived the online resources to be, revealed 79 percent of respondents "strongly agreed" (.37) or "agreed" (.42), while 21 percent were "undecided/moderate" (.12), "disagreed" (.01), or "strongly disagreed" (.08).

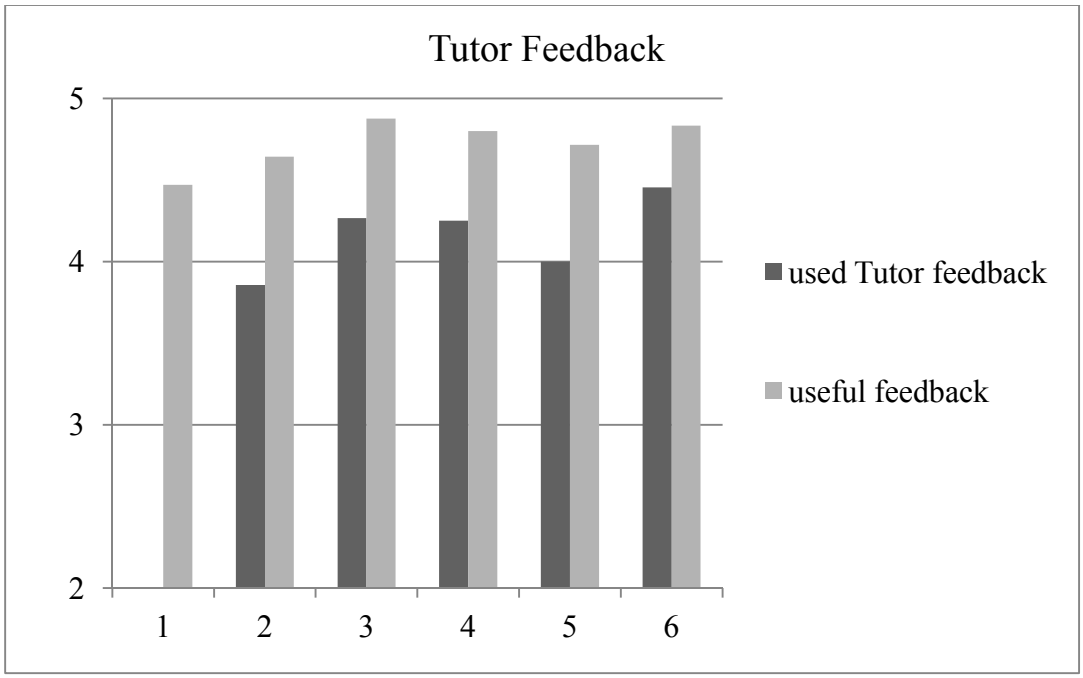

Figure 5. Distribution of tutees'perception and use of tutor feedback

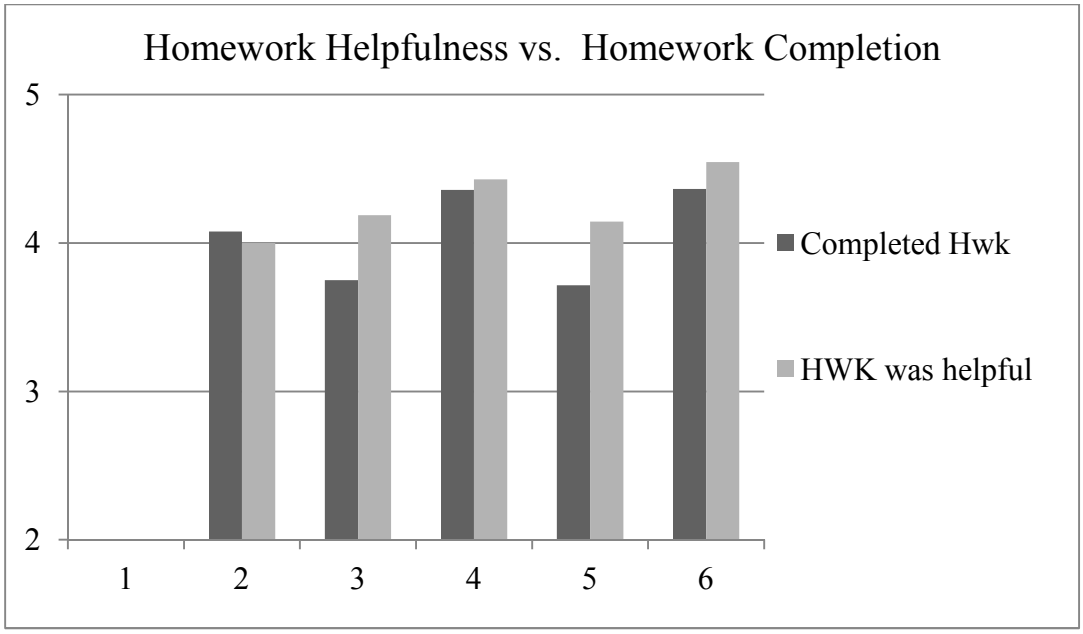

Figure 6. Distribution of tutee's perception and completion of homework

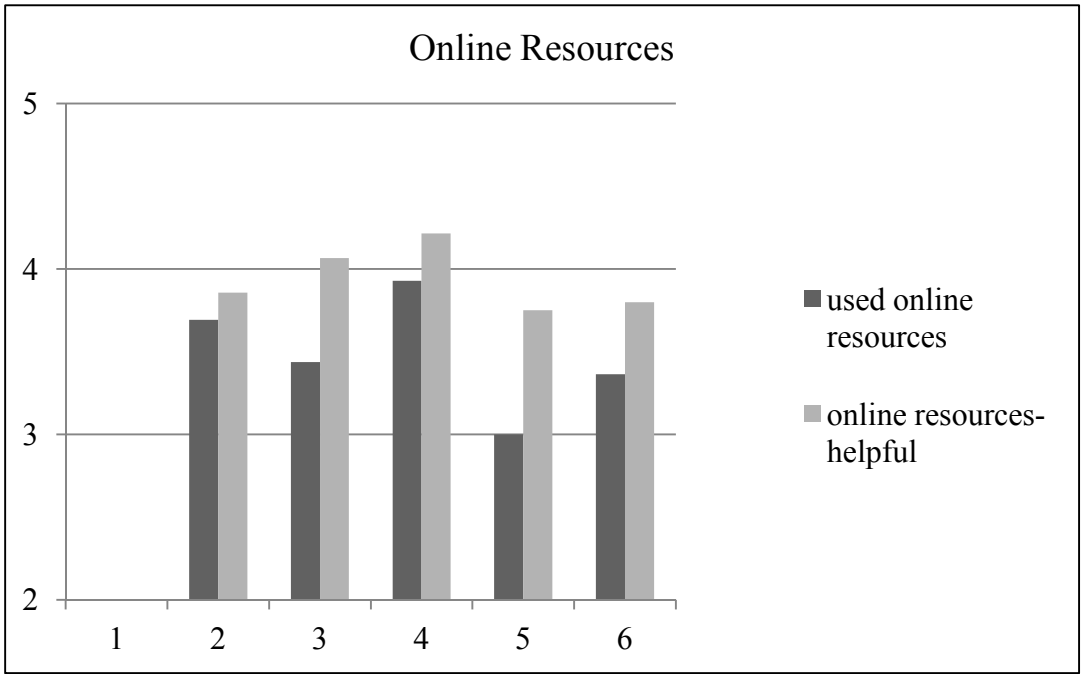

Figure 7. Distribution of tutees' perception and use of online resources

The average scale scores for all thirteen questions revealed instructional exercises (4.49), tutoring materials (4.26), and tutor feedback (4.17) were the three most highly rated elements in the tutees' questionnaire. The three items that received the lowest ranking were completion of homework (4.05), perceived usefulness of online resources (3.94), and use of those resources (3.48).

Table 6

Distribution of Tutee' Feedback by Percent

Statement	Strongly Agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree 1	Response Average
I completed the practice exercises assigned by my tutor.	34%	43%	15%	3%	5%	4.05
The exercises were useful.	48%	36%	10%	3%	3%	4.26
I used the online resources provided for practice.	37%	24%	17%	1%	21%	3.48
The online resources were useful.	37%	42%	12%	1%	8%	3.94
I feel the feedback I received today was useful.	76%	19%	5%	0%	0%	4.72
I incorporated my tutor's feedback into my homework activities.	42%	40%	11%	3%	4%	4.17
Today we worked on one (or more than one) of my pronunciation problems.	76%	19%	4%	0%	1%	4.70
I feel the materials used in today's lesson were useful.	78%	20%	2%	0%	0%	4.76
I feel the activities used in today's lesson were useful.	81%	16%	3%	0%	0%	4.78
I've learned how to correct at least one aspect of my pronunciation.	71%	24%	4%	1%	0%	4.64
I know what to do to improve my pronunciation during my practice at	61%	31%	8%	0%	0%	4.49
My knowledge of effective pronunciation strategies has increased.	62%	32%	6%	1%	0%	4.51
Today's session helped clarify some of my concerns.	66%	26%	8%	0%	0%	4.58

Interspersed between the pre- and post-sections of feedback forms, fifteen emotive adjectives were provided for tutees to indicate any and all which applied to their pronunciation practice at home or to the day's tutoring lesson. In order to find the combined mean score for the frequency of each adjective, the researcher calculated the weekly total use of each term and then averaged the combined scores. See Figure 5 for a comparison of the mean use of emotive terminology describing tutoring lessons.

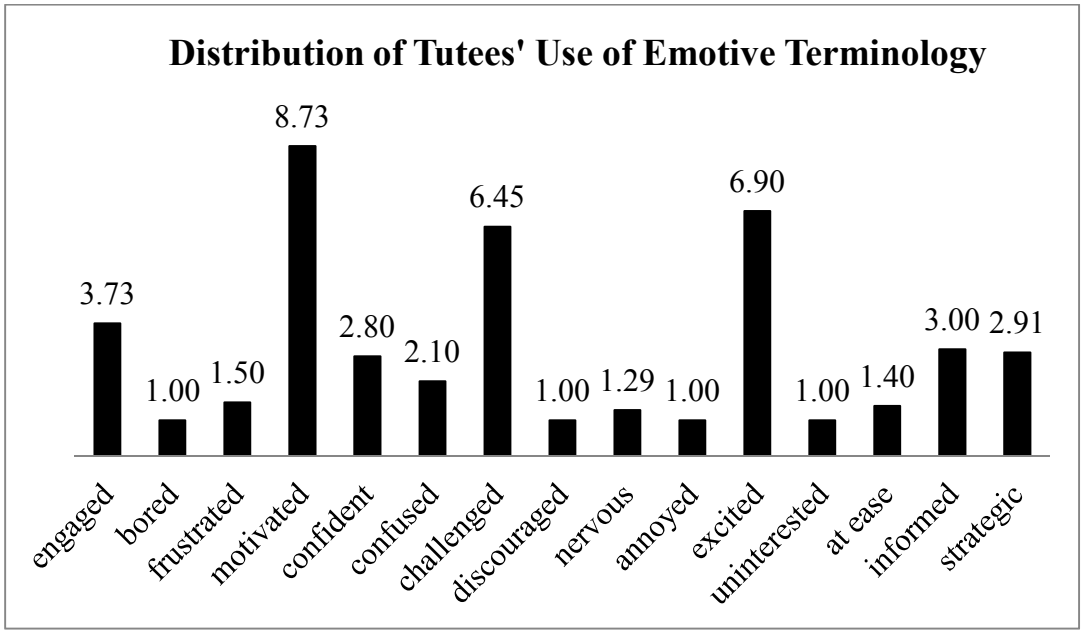

Figure 8. Distribution of tutees' mean use of emotive terminology describing lessons.

Apart from the aforementioned items from tutees' feedback forms, four additional items remain: tutees' weekly record of practice time and three open ended questions regarding what tutees' liked most and/or least about the day's instruction and any comments they may have had (e.g., concerns or suggestions). Concerning tutees' homework, a mean score for practice time outside of class was not able to be calculated,

because only 18 percent (3) of tutees reported their practice time on all the five applicable feedback forms. As for the remaining respondents, 47 percent recorded three or four weeks of practice data, 29 percent one or two weeks, and 6 percent reported no practice data, leaving the question blank. What data was reported appears to suggest tutees' daily practice time varied widely with some tutees' practicing for fifteen minutes a day and others to two or three hours a day.

Concerning the three open ended questions, the researcher noted several themes and trends within tutees' responses. The first question asked tutees what they liked most about the day's lesson. Most tutees recorded responses were either made in relation to lesson content (N = 10) (e.g., message units), or in regards to tutors' corrective feedback (N = 9). Comments regarding pronunciation practice, tutees' sense of competence, and instructional materials were also noted more frequently than others. Of the total number of possible responses (102) to this question, eleven were left blank. Similarly, the second question asked tutees what they liked least about the day's lesson. Of the seventeen tutees, five reported either "nothing," or left the question blank on all six questionnaires. The remaining tutees (N =12) reported a mixture of responses, either leaving the question blank, reporting "nothing," or commenting on particular elements they struggled with (e.g., "Sometimes I forgot which sound is voiced and voiceless and the stress was difficult."). However, within that group, several students (N = 4) each made one comment regarding their dissatisfaction with either the tutor or the structure of tutoring e.g. "when someone oversees our tutoring, this I'm nervous than before" or on one or

more occasion, reported satisfaction with their lessons (N = 3) e.g. “nothing. Class was really useful.” For the final question, which gave tutees’ the opportunity to make suggestions or address their concerns, the majority of tutees’ (N = 13) made statements (48) indicating gratitude for receipt of instruction. Beyond these statements, tutee comments were varied greatly with the exceptions of four comments in which tutees requested additional practice materials or handouts. See Figure 9 for samples of tutee comments.

What I liked most about today's lesson was_____

"I've learn how to correct my pronunciation" – S3

"I can find my problems and learn to how to study myself" - S4

"I know how to speak more fluently with the primary stress and make others understand more clearly" – S14

"I can find my problems and learn to how to study myself" – S6

"Learning how to put stress important words" - S8

"To learn how can I find main stress in a message unit." – S17

"Every exercise is really helpful and fun" – S14

Other comments_____

"Thank you for teach us. I know it is take time to improve our skills" – S2

"I'm sad that this class is ended. Thank you!" - S13

"It was really useful class for me. I really appreciate you give me a chance to study and learn with you. Thank you very much!" – S6

"This class is very helpful and I like it" – S1

Figure 9. Tutee responses to Student Feedback Form questions 16 and 18.

The following chapter discusses the study outcomes and pedagogical implications in light of the data presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: Treatment Efficacy

In order to ascertain tutees' improvement in reduction, contractions, intonation, and primary stress, if any, pre- and post-diagnostic test scores were calculated against a 100 percent base, subtracting tutees' mean scores on T1 from their mean scores on T2. Descriptive statistics were then calculated for each prosodic feature in order to analyze the effect of the study's treatment, that is, tutoring based on the Covert Rehearsal Model's affect on tutees' outcomes. After comparing the pre- and posttest means of each feature, the data revealed mean gains of 13.23 percent in reduction, 10percent in contractions, 7.53 percent in intonation, and 8.92 percent in primary stress. A paired t-test was then used to determine if the difference between tutees' test scores at T1 and T2 were significant. The results of the paired t-test revealed significant differences between students' pre- and post-diagnostic test scores for all four prosodic features. Thus, after receiving tutoring-based intensive instruction, tutees' production significantly changed for reduction ($p = .000$), for contractions ($p = .014$), for intonation ($p = .047$), and for primary stress ($p = .000$), for a total improvement of 9.92 percent ($p = .000$).

Hence, the answer to Research Question 1 (i.e., What is the actual effectiveness of individualized pronunciation instruction under the Covert Rehearsal Model?) can be answered in the affirmative: tutees' significantly improved, between T1 and T2, in their reading of four English prosodic features, that is, reduction, contractions, intonation, and primary stress. These results suggest individualized pronunciation instruction, by

focusing on students' needs and equipping them with predictive rules and strategies, helped tutees' enhance their English pronunciation. Furthermore, they intimate that the efficacy of focused instruction is not necessarily contingent upon a considerable number of instructional hours, the provision of "expert" instruction, or the receipt of instruction via a NS teacher. Though it is possible these results may be due to the influence of other factors not controlled for in this study, they are most likely due to the pedagogical method taught to and utilized by the study's tutors, that is, Dickerson's Covert Rehearsal Model.

The test findings also corroborate the outcomes of earlier research, such as Derwing et al. (1998), by providing further empirical data in support of the efficacy of pronunciation instruction. Likewise, they also support the findings of Dickerson's (1987, 1990, 1994) work on formal/predictive rule use in pronunciation instruction, as well as those found in subsequent studies based on his work. For example, in Enright et al's (1987) study on the effects of L1, proficiency level, and instruction on ESL learners' pronunciation of {D} and {Z} morphemes, Dickerson's predictive rules for allomorph choice were utilized as the study's treatment. Though participants' oral production of {D} originally differed significantly by language group, the experimental treatment effectively neutralized differences between all groups. Similarly, it corroborated Sardegna's (2009) study findings on the short and long term effects of strategy instruction on the production of primary stress. Sardegna combined instruction in predictive strategies with private rehearsal and self-monitoring and found that

participants made significant improvements in reading primary stress, construction stress, and word stress following intensive instruction.

Research Question 2: Student Perceptions

The answer to Research Question 2 (i.e., What are students' perceptions of the effectiveness and usefulness of individualized instruction under the Covert Rehearsal Model?) is that tutees' perceptions were highly positive in terms of the model's effectiveness and usefulness. Tutees' mean rate of scale-score responses on their weekly feedback forms was 4.39, with the average of only two questions falling below 4 (3.48 for the use of online resources and 3.94 for the perceived usefulness of such resources). Though self-reported data is often considered less trustworthy due to the possibility of "social desirability response bias" (SDRB) , that is, a subject's tendency to give an answer they believe the researcher would want or that appears in accordance with polite behavior, self-reported data can still serve as a useful measure in the substantiation of quantitatively derived data (Anastasi, 1988). In the case of this study, the potential influence of SDRB is somewhat mitigated by tutees' knowledge that their answers would not influence their grades, as instruction was provided free of charge and on a non-credit basis. Additionally, though tutees' knew their questionnaires would be reviewed by their tutors for the purpose of informing and improving tutors' practice and instructional provision, tutees were aware from the onset that their information would not be shared beyond the research study (Ehrman & Oxford, 1995).

Concerning tutees' perceptions of the online resources provided by their tutors, tutee ratings may appear counterintuitive in respect to the typical increase in technology usage among users of younger generations. However, it may be that the relatively low ranking of learning supportive technology is due to (a) unclear or inadequate directions concerning the application of resources into tutees' practice, (b) insufficient familiarity with a resource either via tutor modeling or in class practice, or (c) a general lack of accountability for the use of provided resources.

Tutees' slightly lower than presumed rank of online resources notwithstanding, the study's treatment appears to have been successful. Though the present study was not of a sufficient duration nor did it possess the desired sample size to proffer adequate data in demonstration of individual student and/or teacher factors which may enhance or impede a learner's success, it does shed some light on several variables which may influence student success. For example, data from weekly feedback forms demonstrates an apparent increase in tutees' self-confidence around 15 percent, a finding which Ehrman and Oxford (1995) suggested was an important individual variable influencing success.

Furthermore, Ehrman and Oxford (1995) noted the influential effects of motivation on student success. On this point, the present study is unable to speak to a certain degree as tutees volunteered to receive pronunciation tutoring, thus suggesting high levels of motivation were present at the study's commencement. However, Sardegna's (2009) longitudinal study of strategy usage upon learners' production of

English stress types, offers a closer look at students' motivation and learning outcomes. According to Sardegna's findings, six individual factors appeared to be responsible for varying levels of students' success, four if not five of which appear to be related to students' motivation: (1) "[an] urgent need to improve one particular pronunciation area, (2) students' own prioritizing of a particular pronunciation area for focused practice, (3) students' internal motivations to improve, (4) students' external motivations encouraged by the teacher or the need to pass a course, and (5) students' quantity and frequency of practice"(p. 164).

Data taken from tutees' learner profiles appears to corroborate Sardegna's list of motivation-related factors with 70 percent of tutees citing a general desire to improve their language skills and 30 percent specifically citing a desire to either pass the ITA exam (.12), improve communication with their NS peers (.12), or improve their oral skills for employment purposes as the reason for their participation in tutoring. Such findings offer further support for what researchers have long since known to be true, that is, motivation, whether instrumental (occupation-focused), integrative (cultural integration-focused), intrinsic or extrinsic, plays a key role in language learning success (Gardner, 1985, as cited in Ehrman & Oxford, 1995; Horwitz, 1990). Furthermore, a student's motivation is interrelated with their sense of self-efficacy, thus producing a level of success equal to their level of effort exerted. Hence, as many researchers (Cotterall, 2000; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Sardegna, 2005; 2009) have suggested, instructional goals must

be explicit and achievable and the learning environment positive and encouraging in order to maximize students' motivation.

In regards to the present study's approach to individualized instruction via face to face tutoring, and as the role of tutor motivation can easily be assumed to be of near import in learner success as that of their students, it seemed only natural to pair ESL students with novice MA TESOL student-teachers, under the supervision of a professional instructor (Ehty & Larson, as cited in Frey & Reigeluth, 1986). The choice of tutoring as the primary means of delivering instruction was informed by Weigle and Nelson's (2004) study on L2 writing, because it employed a similar framework, utilizing native and non-native speaking student-teachers as tutors and volunteer tutees. Thus, in each study, both groups of participants were personally invested (motivated), the former linking theory with practice and the latter improving upon a particular L2 skill.

By using student-teachers who were fulfilling a course requirement, tutors were more likely to be perceived, within the context of peer mediated tutoring, as "language informants," interested and supportive, but not overly authoritative. It was thus postulated that the coupling of peer mediated tutoring with a physically neutral instructional context would foster the optimal conditions for learners' success as suggested by Weigle and Nelson's findings.

Though the choice of instructional model was not left to the researcher's discretion, Dickerson's Process of Covert Rehearsal was and is the only model the researcher is aware of, which supplies students with the tools and skills necessary to

continue work on their pronunciation outside of the classroom. Though not often studied in regards to pronunciation learning, numerous studies on language learning strategies have shown a correlation between greater levels of student success and the use of strategies, specifically the frequency and pairing in their deployment (Ehrman & Oxford, 1989; Oxford, 1989; Oxford & Crookall, 1989) Thus, the implicit constructs imbedded within Dickerson's model provided tutees a springboard for success, thereby growing their competence and confidence. With these two variables of sufficient strength, equipping students with predictive strategies could then produce self-motivated, autonomous learners.

The following chapter continues the discussion of the study's major findings as they relate to the research limitations, suggestions for future research, and conclusions to be drawn.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

Despite the abundant research examining the comparative value of instruction in segmental and suprasegmental speech features, few studies have explored the actual short and/or long term efficacy of such instruction. It is to this end, and in light of the ever growing communicative needs of international students, skilled foreign workers, immigrants and refugees, that this study attempted to extend the research of contemporary examinations of ESL/EFL pronunciation by investigating the perceived and short-term actualized efficacy of individualized pronunciation instruction.

The study's treatment provided tutees with six hours of focused instruction in English pronunciation over an eight week period during the Fall 2011 semester. Instruction was provided by MA student-teachers (tutors), who received in tandem, instruction in L2 pedagogy and features of applied linguistics. Lesson content was focused on each tutee's weakest areas as diagnosed through a read-aloud test, which the tutees also took at the end of tutoring in order to measure their pronunciation improvement. Furthermore, lesson content was grounded on the Covert Rehearsal Model, which incorporates student-empowering instruction in *prediction* skills as well as perception and production skills. Study data were gathered from tutees' pre- and post-tests, tutee and tutor questionnaires/feedback forms, and tutor portfolios.

The following sections summarize the main findings, discuss some pedagogical implications of the study and the limitations of the research, and suggest possible directions for future research.

Main Findings

Findings indicated significant improvement in tutees' oral reading production of English reduction, contractions, intonation, and primary stress after receiving six hours of peer-mediated focused pronunciation instruction via MA TESOL student teachers. Group results revealed an overall 9.92 percent improvement in all four areas, with a 13.23 percent improvement in reduction, 10 percent in contractions, 7.53 percent in intonation, 8.92 percent in primary stress. Qualitative results from tutee feedback forms indicated tutees considered their instruction to be beneficial and personally empowering.

Pedagogical Implications

Along with tutees' improvement, study results indicated tutees' self confidence and self efficacy were enhanced after receiving instruction focused on their needs and accompanied by predictive rules. Though communicative language models have deemphasized the importance of accuracy and explicit rule use, a modicum of predictive rules and strategies should be retained if teachers are to facilitate learner autonomy. Furthermore, if NS and NNS student-teachers were successfully able to learn and disseminate six hours of instruction which resulted in the significant improvement of tutees' oral readings of English reduction, contractions, intonation, and primary stress, it can then be hypothesized that training seasoned teachers would not be an insurmountable task. Teachers do not need to become specialists in pronunciation in order to procure successful instructional results.

Similarly, with tutees' significant pronunciation improvement resulting from a mere six hours of instruction, it is highly probable that they would improve more if they had more sessions. It can be expected that more tutoring sessions would help them improve more. In addition, the outcome of instruction could have resulted in better gains if it had been credit bearing, or students' accountability for their homework through audio recorded assignments would have been a factor.

Limitations

Although the findings of this study are quite interesting and potentially helpful to our current understanding of pronunciation in L2/FL learning, a number of limitations must be kept in mind. Foremost, the generalizability of the study's outcomes is mitigated in part by the small sample size (N = 17), lack of a control group, and brevity of treatment. Therefore, learner outcomes should be approached with due caution. Furthermore, the study's sample does not represent a truly random selection of participants because tutees consisted solely of student volunteers, which would logically entail that learners possessed a preconceived belief in the feasibility of the learning task, accompanied by a generally high level of motivation, which possibly confounded the study's results. A further limitation related to the generalizability and small sample size is the homogeneity or lack thereof in the participant sample. Though the number of male and female tutees was almost even (8/9), tutee's L1 backgrounds, though fairly representative of the university's foreign student population, were not sufficiently represented in order to draw any conclusions regarding the effect of L1 on learner

success. Additionally, the present data is inadequate to address to what degree, if any, specific tutor/tutee pairings may have affected tutees' resultant improvement.

Furthermore, due to gaps in data reporting, even preliminary conclusions concerning learner outcomes in relation to particular variables, namely the quality, quantity, and frequency of practice cannot be broached here by study findings. However, the results of other studies (e.g., Sardegna, 2009), suggest that greater frequency of practice has a positive effect on learner outcomes. Furthermore, Sardegna's findings intimate that nationality, time in country, and gender have no direct impact on students' improvement.

Future Research

As previously noted, the field of pronunciation research is relatively new despite the growing need among NNS as we continue to expand our globalized society. This study has attempted to add to our collective knowledge of pronunciation instruction. However, study results have also served to highlight items for further investigation. For example, further research is necessary to investigate the relationship between the amount of time spent in covert rehearsal and the frequency of such practice on students' levels of improvement under the Covert Rehearsal Model. Additionally, further studies should examine the effect of other variables, such as students' L1, lesson duration, tutor/tutee rapport, tutor feedback, and degree of improvement, to ascertain the effectiveness of the instructional model for various L1 groups.

Furthermore, as Dickerson (1994) has suggested, empirical evidence is needed to shed light on a possible threshold for pronunciation strategy instruction, though students at every level can benefit from the use of predictive patterns. To date, researchers have focused their attention mainly on intermediate level students and, thus, further research is needed to reveal if instruction is likewise efficacious at the beginning, lower, or even advanced levels. Finally, the results of the present study and the aforementioned suggestions for future research carry a particular implication for U.S. universities. That is, as the world's largest "exporter" of higher education and the origin of the ITA position, U.S. institutions of higher learning are optimally poised to conduct similar research, making use of a free and ready source of instructors within their own student body, to assist in the education of their ITAs and other NN students.

Appendix A

Consent Forms

Student Participant Consent Form
IRB Protocol 2011-08-0021

I am invited to participate in a research study titled ″An inquiry into the perceived and actualized efficacy of individualized pronunciation instruction" conducted by Kathleen Christian Smith (kcsmith@utexas.edu) and supervised by Dr. Veronica Gabriela Sardegna (sardegna@mail.utexas.edu) from the Department of Foreign Language Education at the University of Texas at Austin. I was selected as a potential participant because I am or will be taking free tutoring lessons from Foreign Language Education (FLE) students receiving training in pronunciation instruction. I should be at a pre-intermediate or intermediate level of English proficiency and, although I may be taking some language courses, none of these courses should focus on pronunciation. The purpose of this study is two-fold: a) to gain insight into student beliefs about personalized pronunciation instruction and the effectiveness of receiving such instruction., and b) to determine what student and/or teacher factors, if any, may contribute to the effectiveness of such instruction.

I understand that my participation is voluntary. My decision to participate will not have any effect on my relationship with UT Austin. My coursework at the university will not be affected by my decision to participate. I can ask to have all of the information about me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed. In addition, I understand that I must be 18 years of age or older in order to participate.

All the information collected and analyzed will be strictly confidential, with all individual identifiers kept in a locked file cabinet or password protected document. During discussions and analyses of the data, the researchers will use a pseudonym of my name at all times and refrain from using any individually identifiable information.

If I agree to be in this study, I will be asked to do the following in Fall 2011:

1. Allow the researchers to collect and analyze my responses to weekly questionnaires, observation reports, reflections, notes, and any recorded assessments and/or activities concerning my progress and work during the tutoring sessions.

If I decide to participate, I will receive the following: a) a written assessment report detailing my progress in terms of percentages of improvement in my most problematic pronunciation areas, and b) an individualized education plan with suggestions and recommendations for further practice. The suggestions will include a comprehensive list of useful online resources. Furthermore, the results of the study may contribute to an improvement in the quality of instruction provided to ESL/EFL students and to student teachers in MATESL programs. This endeavor also has the potential to benefit the fields

of second language acquisition, pronunciation teaching, and teacher education through the researchers' future scholarly presentations and published work based on the results of the study. I will not receive any direct benefits for participating in this study nor will I receive any monetary compensation.

The risks towards participants are minimal and expected to be no greater than everyday life. The single risk is the unlikely possibility for loss of confidentiality. This study is in no way relevant or related to any of my coursework at The University of Texas at Austin during Fall 2011.

In deciding whether or not to volunteer as a participant in this study, I can take this opportunity to ask the researchers any questions about the nature of the study, or the nature of my participation in the study. The investigators will answer any questions about the research, now or during the course of the project. If I have questions about my rights as a study participant, or I am dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, I may contact - anonymously, if I wish - the Office of Research Support at The University of Texas at Austin at (512) 471-8871 or email at orsc@uts.cc.utexas.edu.

I will notify Ms. Kathleen Smith and Dr. Veronica Sardegna of my decision to participate by replying to their contact e-mail message confirming my participation in the study.

Student Teacher Participant Consent Form
IRB Protocol 2011-08-0021

I am invited to participate in a research study titled ″An inquiry into the perceived and actualized efficacy of individualized pronunciation instruction" conducted by Kathleen Christian Smith (kcsmith@utexas.edu) and supervised by Dr. Veronica Gabriela Sardegna (sardegna@mail.utexas.edu) from the Department of Foreign Language Education at the University of Texas at Austin. I was selected as a potential participant because I took *English as a Second Language: Oral (EDC 390T)* at the University of Texas at Austin during Fall 2011 and at least one of my tutees for this course has agreed to participate in the study. The purpose of this study is two-fold: a) to gain insight into student beliefs about personalized pronunciation instruction and the effectiveness of receiving such instruction, and b) to determine what student and/or teacher factors, if any, may contribute to the effectiveness of such instruction.

I understand that my participation is voluntary. My decision to participate will not have any effect on my relationship with UT Austin. The grades for the course have been released and will not be affected by my decision. I can ask to have all of the information about me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed. In addition, I understand that I must be 18 years of age or older in order to participate.

All the information collected and analyzed will be strictly confidential, with all individual identifiers kept in a locked file cabinet or password protected document. During discussions and analyses of the data, the researchers will use a pseudonym of my name at all times and refrain from using any individually identifiable information.

If I agree to be in this study, I will be asked to do the following pertaining to the course I took on *English as a Second Language: Oral (EDC 390T)* at the University of Texas at Austin during Fall 2011:

2. Allow the researchers to collect and analyze data from my course portfolio, which contains written and oral assessments of my tutee(s); activities, lesson plans, and materials I used/developed for the tutoring lessons; and my reflections on the outcomes of the lessons.
3. Allow the researchers to collect and analyze my observation reports of other tutors' lessons, and my reflections to observation reports given to me by observers to my tutoring lessons.
4. Provide copies of the following documents only if these are not already accessible to the researchers **in their full form** via my portfolio:
   a) My student assessments.
   b) My lesson plans, materials, and reflections.
   c) My reflections to observation reports.

d) My observation reports to other tutors' lessons.
e) The answers to instructor and student questionnaires
f) My final written evaluative report of my tutee(s)
g) My tutee(s) individualized education plan

*My final written evaluative report and individualized education plan for my tutee(s) will be provided to the tutee if they have also agreed to participate in this study.

The study has no direct influence on these materials. All of the aforementioned assignments were completed and graded prior to receiving a request for my participation in the study.

No direct benefits are expected to result from my participation in this study. However, the study will investigate the factors exciting or inhibiting student success in the pursuit of English pronunciation proficiency, which may indicate areas in need of curricular focus in order to more fully realize the potential of this type of pedagogical endeavor at the University of Texas as well as in other institutions of higher education. While I may not experience an immediate effect, the results of the study may contribute to an improvement in the quality of instruction provided to ESL/EFL students as well as to student teachers in MATESL programs. This endeavor also has the potential to benefit the fields of second language acquisition, pronunciation teaching, and teacher education through the researchers' future scholarly presentations and published work based on the results of the study. I will not receive any monetary compensation for my participation in this study.

The risks towards participants are minimal and expected to be no greater than everyday life. The single risk is the unlikely possibility for loss of confidentiality. This study is in no way relevant or related to my achievement or grades in EDC 390T.

In deciding whether or not to volunteer as a participant in this study, I can take this opportunity to ask the researchers any questions about the nature of the study, or the nature of my participation in the study. The investigators will answer any questions about the research. If I have questions about my rights as a study participant, or I am dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, I may contact - anonymously, if I wish - the Office of Research Support at The University of Texas at Austin at (512) 471-8871 or email at orsc@uts.cc.utexas.edu

I will notify Ms. Kathleen Smith and Dr. Veronica Sardegna of my decision to participate by replying to their contact e-mail message confirming my participation in the study.

Appendix B

Learner Profile Sheet

Student Profile Sheet

Name (last, first): _____

Age: _____ **Gender**: ☐ male ☐ female **Field of Study:** _____

Country of Origin: _____ **Native Language:** _____

Student Status: ☐ undergraduate ☐ graduate ☐ other (Specify:_____)

1. **How long have you been in the U.S.?**

   _____

2. **a) Have you lived in any other English-speaking countries?** ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

   b) If yes, how long?_____ **Where?**_____

3. **What is your prospective date of graduation?**_____

4. **a) Have you taken or are you taking a pronunciation course?** ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

   b) If yes, please provide the name, place, and dates of coursework.

   _____

5. **a) Have you or are you currently receiving tutoring in pronunciation?** ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

   b) If yes, please provide the place, and dates of study._____

6. **What percentage of each day do you spend speaking English?**

   Circle one: 0%-20% 20%-40% 40%-60% 60%-80% 80%-100%

7. **What percentage of each day do you spend listening to English?**

   Circle one: 0%-20% 20%-40% 40%-60% 60%-80% 80%-100%

8. **a) Do you practice your English skills alone or with others?** _____

   b) What materials do you use? _____

9. **Why did you sign-up for pronunciation lessons?**

   _____

10. **Does your coursework or employment require you to give oral presentations?**

    _____

11. **What area(s) of pronunciation would you like to work on?**

    _____

12. **What area(s) of pronunciation would you like to work on?**

    _____

Appendix C

Feedback Forms

NAME: _____ **DATE: _____**

Student Feedback Form

Please complete this form before and after your tutoring session. Your tutor is a teacher in training. Your responses will help improve your tutor's teaching, and ultimately the quality of the instruction that you receive. Your responses will not affect in any way your tutor's grade in our program, or your relationship with UT Austin. They may be shared with a wider audience for research purposes. Please be honest and specific in your responses.

Thank you!
Dr. Sardegna.

My homework for today's lesson was
_____
_____
I practiced for _____(min/hs) _____(*daily* / *weekly*).

I. Before the Session

	Agree				Disagree
1. I completed the practice exercises assigned by my tutor.	5	4	3	2	1
2. The exercises were useful.	5	4	3	2	1
3. I used the online resources provided for practice.	5	4	3	2	1
4. The online resources were useful.	5	4	3	2	1
5. I incorporated my tutor's feedback into my homework activities.	5	4	3	2	1

6. During my practice at home I felt: (circle all that apply)
engaged – bored – frustrated – motivated – confident – confused – challenged discouraged -- nervous – annoyed – excited – uninterested — at ease – informed -- strategic

II. After the Session

	Agree				Disagree
7. Today we worked on one (or more than one) of my pronunciation problems.	5	4	3	2	1
8. I feel the materials used in today's lesson were useful.	5	4	3	2	1
9. I feel the feedback I received today was useful.	5	4	3	2	1
10. I feel the activities were useful.	5	4	3	2	1
11. I've learned how to correct at least one aspect of my pronunciation.	5	4	3	2	1
12. I know what to do to improve my pronunciation during my practice at home.	5	4	3	2	1
13. My knowledge of effective pronunciation strategies has increased.	5	4	3	2	1
14. Today's session helped clarify some of my concerns.	5	4	3	2	1

15. During the lesson I felt: (circle all that apply)
engaged – bored – frustrated – motivated – confident – confused – challenged discouraged -- nervous – annoyed – excited – uninterested — at ease – satisfied -- strategic

16. What I liked the most about today's tutoring was_____
_____
_____

17. What I liked the least about today's tutoring was_____
_____
_____

18. Other comments (recommendations, concerns, suggestions, etc.)
_____
_____

Tutor's name: _____Student's Name: _____Date: _____

Instructor Feedback Form

Please complete this form before and after your tutoring session for each of your tutees. The objective of this form is to help you reflect on our tutoring session. Your responses will not affect in any way your grade in the course unless you do not complete the form at all. These responses may also be shared with a wider audience for research purposes. Please be honest and specific.

Thank you!
Dr. Sardegna

I. Before the Session

Agree Disagree

1. The student has completed the practice exercises I assigned for today 5 4 3 2 1
2. The student appears to have spent sufficient time in practice. 5 4 3 2 1
3. The student appears to be prepared for today (has practiced, brought questions, etc.) 5 4 3 2 1
4. I feel: (circle all that apply)

engaged - frustrated - motivated - confident - confused - prepared - challenged - discouraged nervous - annoyed - excited - uninterested - at ease - informed - organized - unprepared

II. After the Session

Agree Disagree

5. Today we worked on one (or more than one) of my student's problems. 5 4 3 2 1
6. I feel I have received adequate training to instruct today's lesson. 5 4 3 2 1
7. I feel the materials I utilized in today's lesson were useful. 5 4 3 2 1
8. I feel the activities and materials I developed for today were clear and useful. 5 4 3 2 1
9. Student progress indicates that:
   - the student has utilized strategies correctly during practice at home. 5 4 3 2 1
   - the student has incorporated my feedback into his/her practice. 5 4 3 2 1
   - the student has improved at least one aspect of his/her pronunciation. 5 4 3 2 1
10. I have addressed any confusion or difficulties raised by my student. 5 4 3 2 1
11. I knew how to answer most of my students' questions. 5 4 3 2 1
12. My feedback and corrections were appropriate and clear. 5 4 3 2 1
13. I have given an assignment, exercises, and resources for practice at home. 5 4 3 2 1
14. During the lesson ***I*** felt : (circle all that apply)

engaged - frustrated - motivated - confident - confused - prepared - challenged - discouraged nervous - annoyed - excited - uninterested - at ease - informed - organized - unprepared

15. During the lesson I felt that ***my student*** was: (circle all that apply)

engaged - bored - frustrated - motivated - confident - confused - challenged - discouraged nervous - annoyed - excited - uninterested - at ease - satisfied - strategic

16. What I liked the most about today's tutoring was_____
_____
_____

17. What I liked the least about today's tutoring was_____
_____
_____

18. If I could change something about today's session, I would _____

_____
_____

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